

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year ended December 31st, 1938.

To Thetford Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for 1938 as follows:—

SECTION A.—STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITION OF AREA.

Area 7,096 Acres.

Registrar General's Estimate of Resident Population end 1938—3,990.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1938) according to Rate Books—1,271.

Rateable Value—£16,196.

Sum represented by a penny rate—£62 8s. 8d.

The District is partly Rural and partly Urban.

The main Industries are Motor Engineering, Patent Pulp Manufacturing, Chemical Manure Manufacturing, Fruit Canning, Coffee Preparation and General Trading. In the Rural Area General Agriculture and Estate work are the main industries. Forestry work and Sugar-Beet growing give seasonal employment. The erection of Aerodromes and other public works in the neighbourhood continues to give employment. Unemployment has been on the whole less severe. No new Industries have been established in the District.

Vital Statistics.

			Total.	M.	F.	
Live Births	Legitimate	...	50	25	25	Birth Rate per 1,000 13.
	Illegitimate	...	2	1	1	
Still Births	...	...	Nil.	-	-	Rate per 1,000 Nil.
Deaths	...	...	44			Rate per 1,000 population 11.02.

Deaths from Puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar General's short list):—

		Deaths.	Rate per 1,000 Births.
No. 29 Puerperal Sepsis	...	Nil.	Nil.
No. 30 Other Puerperal causes	...	Nil.	Nil.
Total	...	Nil.	Nil.

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:—

All Infants per 1,000 live Births	...	Nil.
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	4
„ „ Measles (all ages)	...	Nil.
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	Nil.
„ „ Diarrhoea (all ages)	...	Nil.

The principle causes of death were Heart Disease 13, Diseases of the Kidney 6, Diseases of the Lungs 6, Cancer 4. Of the deaths registered 18 occurred in persons over 70 years of age, 9 were over 80 and 2 over 90.

It will be noticed that the District has again a Nil Infant Mortality. This makes the third time in the last four years that this has occurred and is very satisfactory. Also once again there is a Nil Maternal Mortality.

There have been no special causes of sickness or invalidity noticeable during the year. Influenza was of a mild type. There is no evidence that unemployment has exercised any significant influence on the health and physique of the population.

SECTION B.—GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.**1. (i). Personnel.**

Medical Officer of Health, part time, M.D., D.P.H., who is also Medical Officer to the Maternity and Child Welfare Association.

Sanitary Inspector, part time, Royal Sanitary Institute.

Health Visitor, who also acts as Nurse to the Infant Welfare Clinic; C.M.B., Royal Sanitary Institute Health Visitor's Examination, Royal Sanitary Institute Maternity and Child Welfare Certificate.

District Nurse, State Registered Nurse, C.M.B.

Maternity Nurse, C.M.B., appointed by the County Council through the Norfolk Nursing Federation.

(ii). Laboratory Facilities.

There has been no change during the year. The scheme has worked efficiently.

(iii). Ambulance Facilities.

A Motor Ambulance stationed in the town serves the town and a number of villages round about. It is manned and driven by the local detachment of the British Red Cross Association and the Thetford Division of the St. John Ambulance Association. The town owes a great debt of gratitude to those men and women who give so much time to this very useful work. The Ambulance is supported from a fund collected by an Association in the town called the "Friends of the Ambulance," who have made themselves responsible for the upkeep of the machine and provide funds for the two Associations who run it.

(iv). Nursing in the Home.

This work is carried out by the District Nurse, Nurse Ramshaw, who is provided by the Norfolk Nursing Federation and works under a committee of local ladies who make themselves responsible for collecting money required to pay the salary in addition to the subscriptions of the patients. The Nurse's services are much appreciated.

(v). Treatment Centres and Clinics.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

This work has been carried out as in past years by the Thetford and District Maternity and Child Welfare Association. The new scheme, whereby a whole-time midwife was appointed for the town, is working well and smoothly and Nurse Bourne's services are much appreciated.

I much regret to report the death of two of the original members of the Association, Miss Seagrave an original member of the Committee and Miss A. H. Bidwell who has been the Infant Welfare Clinic Secretary since it opened. Their services will be much missed in the work. Mrs. Jolly has kindly undertaken this work with the help of Mrs. Sear. Mrs. Carter has kindly continued to look after the maternity bags and keeps them fully stocked and Mrs. Baly continues to supervise the tea arrangements at the Clinic.

We are very much indebted to those ladies for their great help. The fact that the District has again a Nil Infant Mortality, and a Nil Maternal Mortality must be ascribed in part to the good work carried out by the Association.

Infant Welfare Clinic.

This Clinic is open on the first and third Wednesdays in each month and again record attendances have been made. There have been no interruptions for Infectious Disease. The returns are as follows :—

No. of attendances of Mothers	...	...	500
" " " " Children	...	...	651
Average " " " per Clinic			28.3
No. of Home Visits	...	...	2539
Free Milk provided	...	...	457 Gallons

Ante-Natal Clinic.

This Clinic is open every third Wednesday in the month at the Cottage Hospital. 16 cases attended and made 19 attendances.

Post-Natal Clinic.

This Clinic is open at the same time at the Hospital. 12 cases attended and made 12 attendances.

17 cases attending these Clinics received Dental treatment.

Glycerine Clinic for Pelvic Sepsis.

This Clinic which is run by Dr. Lorimer is held at St. Barnabas Hospital and is open as required. 179 Clinics were held and 201 treatments given.

(vi). Hospitals.

There has been no change in the Hospital Services during the year.

2. Not applicable.

3. Midwifery and Child Welfare.

(i). Midwifery and Maternity Services.

These services are carried out by the Thetford and District Maternity and Child Welfare Association and the Thetford District Nursing Association through their Midwife, Nurse Bourne, as above.

(ii). Institutional Provision for Mothers and Children.

As before.

(iii). Health Visitors.

The Nurse attached to the Infant Welfare Clinic carries out this work.

(iv). Child Life Protection.

No change.

(v). Arrangements for Dental Orthopædic, etc. Cases.

Children requiring Dental Treatment receive it from the School Dentist. Orthopædic Cases receive it under the County Scheme and the County Nurse visits them in their homes. Venereal Disease Cases receive treatment at Norfolk and Norwich Hospital under the County Scheme.

4. Nursing Homes.

There are two Registered Nursing Homes in the town and the Cottage Hospital. They are supervised and controlled by the County M.O.H.

SECTION C.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF AREA.

1. (i). Water.

No extensions to the Public Water Supply were carried out during the year. The supply was in every way satisfactory both in quantity and quality. A sample is sent to the Public Analyst once each year for Chemical and Bacteriological Examination. His report this year is as follows: "This water is of very good chemical and bacteriological quality, free from pollution, and quite suitable for drinking and all the purposes of a public supply. The chemical data show little variation compared with previous analysis."

(ii). Drainage and Sewerage.

There have been no alterations or extensions of this service during the year.

2. Rivers and Streams.

No action has been taken this year.

3. (i). Closet Accommodation.

The only changes have been the conversion of 1 vault to W.C. and 7 vaults to pails, together with the addition of 4 W.C's. to new built houses, making a total of 306 W.C's., 574 pails and 414 privies.

(ii). Public Cleansing.

The collection of refuse remains the same. The pit at Melford Common has been closed and all refuse is now taken to the Pit on the Mundford Road.

(iii). Sanitary Inspection of Area.

The report of the Sanitary Inspector is as follows :—

No. of inspections for general nuisances	...	...	361
" " informal notices received	...	...	22
" " statutory notices received	...	...	Nil.
" " nuisances abated as a result of notices	...	...	22

(iv). Shops and Offices.

General routine inspections under the Shops Act, 1934 have been carried out and warning was given in one case.

(v). Camping Sites.

There are no camping sites in the district.

(vi). Smoke Abatement.

No action has been taken.

(vii). Swimming Baths and Pools.

The facilities provided by the Council at the Swimming Bath at the Nuns' Bridges remain the same. They are fully taken advantage of.

(viii). Eradication of Bed Bugs.

Two cases in Council Houses were dealt with during the year. The method employed was spraying the whole house with Zaldecide, the work being done by the Sanitary Inspector.

4. Schools.

The sanitary conditions and water supply of the Schools has been satisfactory.

SECTION D.—HOUSING.

The report on inspection and action taken is as follows :—

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :—

(1) (a).	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	54
(b).	Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	152
(2) (a).	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	54
(b).	Number of inspections made for the purpose	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	54
(3).	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
(4).	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices :—

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority, or their officers	19
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year :—

(a).	Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—												
(1).	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...											19
(2).	Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—												
(a).	By Owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
(b).	By Local Authority in default of Owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.
(b).	Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—												
(1).	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22
(2).	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—												
(a).	By Owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22
(b).	By Local Authority in default of Owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.
(c).	Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—												
(1).	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which demolition orders were made	...	...										Nil.
(2).	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of demolition orders	...	...										Nil.
(d).	Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—												
(1).	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which closing orders were made	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.
(2).	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which closing orders were determined, the tenement of room having been rendered fit	...	...	...									Nil.

4. Housing Act, 1936 (Overcrowding).

(a).	(i).	Number of dwellings overcrowded at end of year	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
	(ii).	Number of families dwelling therein	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
	(iii).	Number of persons dwelling therein	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	121
(b).		Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.
(c).	(i).	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.
	(ii).	Number of persons concerned in such cases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.
(d).		Council have scheme in hand for building 22 houses to abate the overcrowding (these are now completed).											

SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a). Milk Supply.

As in previous year. 104 samples taken and tested by Lactometer. 4 samples were submitted to Public Analyst. 2 proved genuine, 1 was 20% deficient in milk fat and 1 15% deficient in milk fat. In the latter 2 cases the vendor was prosecuted and fined on each summons.

(b). Meat and other Foods.

Carcases inspected and condemned :—

							Cattle ex- cluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep & Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known) approximately	...	...	...	...	...	...	260	—	100	780	624
Number inspected approximately	...	...	...	...	...	...	208	—	80	624	496
All diseases except Tuberculosis :—											
Whole carcase condemned	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	—	—	—	8
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis							5	—	—	—	8
Tuberculosis only :—											
Whole carcase condemned	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	11
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis							Nil.	—	—	—	11

(c). Adulteration.

This work is done by the County Council Inspectors. There have been no prosecutions.

(d). Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.

This work is done by the Public Analyst.

(e). Nutrition.

No special work has been done under this heading, except as usual at the Infant Welfare Clinic. The Council continue to supply milk to School Children.

(f). Shell-fish.

Not applicable.

SECTION F.—PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

1. Not applicable.

2. The town has been remarkably free of ordinary Infectious Diseases during the year. The methods adopted for dealing with it remain the same and have been effective.

The table of notifications is as follows :—

Disease.	Total Cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	2	Nil.	Nil.
Diphtheria	1	Nil.	Nil.
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	Nil.	Nil.
Erysipelas	1	Nil.	Nil.
Chicken Pox	44	Nil.	Nil.

During the year the Council took up the question of Diphtheria Immunisation of Children. It was decided to offer the treatment free to all children up to the school leaving age. The scheme was advertised in the local press and by leaflets handed in to every house. The work is carried out by the local private practitioners who use the Serum A.P.T. Evans provided by the Council and are remunerated at the rate of 2/6 for cases done at their surgeries and 3/6 when they visit the patients in their homes. The “Two Shot” method was used and the practitioners filled up a Schedule giving particulars of each case and especially of any severe reactions. Unfortunately only a few patients have taken advantage of the facilities provided and further efforts are being made to popularise the treatment. No case of severe reaction has so far been reported.

3. Not applicable.

4. Prevention of Blindness.

There have been no changes in the methods adopted.

Tuberculosis.

New Cases and Mortality.

Age of Persons.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
5 to 15	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
15 to 25	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 to 35	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
45 to 55	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Totals	5	—	1	—	2	—	—	—

I would like to put on record my appreciation of the work done by your Sanitary Inspector and my thanks to him for his help during the year.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

Thetford,
29th July, 1939.

And: Oliver
and A.P.H.